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# THE BRYOLOGIST

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No. 1

## THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE BRYOLOGIST AND THE SULLIVANT MOSS SOCIETY

ANNIE MORRILL SMITH

In the early fall of 1898 Mrs. Britton told me of the plan to form a society devoted to the study of mosses, and asked me if I would become a member and help to work it up. In January of that year there had appeared a new department of the *Fern Bulletin* edited by Willard N. Clute, called the Moss Department, publishing four pages under the editorship of A. J. Grout. Dr. Grout was then living in Plymouth, New Hampshire. He said in the opening paragraph, "This department is opened with the purpose of enabling any one at all interested in mosses to get some knowledge of those plants without excessive labor or expense. The editor will try also to identify for subscribers difficult specimens accompanied by notes and postage. It is also hoped that the BULLETIN may become a medium for communication of bryological notes of interest in the same way that has been so admirably done in the case of ferns and fern allies." Thus was launched the first number, as a four-page moss department of the *Fern Bulletin*. The response was most gratifying and the second number was increased to eight pages and headed "The Bryologist, a Department of the Fern Bulletin, Edited by Dr. A. J. Grout."

In the July number the desire for an organization for the study of mosses was announced. A Chapter somewhat on the same lines as the Fern Chapter was proposed, and all who wished to join such a Chapter were requested to communicate with Dr. Grout so that the organization could be completed before fall. The first article in the October number by Dr. Grout, states that the proposed Moss Chapter had received support beyond the expectation of editor and friends, as not only beginners but several prominent moss students had volunteered their support. To quote, "It is therefore proposed to form a correspondence Chapter of the Agassiz Association for the study of mosses, with a constitution similar to that of the Linnaean Fern Chapter. It seems appropriate that this Chapter should be called 'The Sullivant Moss Chapter' after that 'Prince of American Bryologists' William Starling Sullivant."

Mrs. Britton, Mr. Clute, editor of the *Fern Bulletin*, and Dr. Grout, editor of THE BRYOLOGIST, acted as a committee to name officers for the first year, and their appointment was published in the January number, Dr. Grout acting as Secretary-Treasurer *pro tem.* till that time. The officers for 1899 were: President, A. J. Grout; Vice-President, Prof. J. Franklin Collins, of Providence, R. I.; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Annie Morrill Smith, Brooklyn, N. Y. These

officers were to draft a constitution, which with the list of 34 Charter members was distributed early in the year, and adopted prior to April, 1899. The Chapter was to be entitled to a page in each issue of THE BRYOLOGIST for notes and news items. The annual dues were to be 50 cents for Active, and 25 cents for Associate members, both classes to receive THE BRYOLOGIST free, also such offerings of mosses as would be from time to time distributed.

The 29 Active Charter Members were:

- Mrs. Emilia C. Anthony—Gouverneur, N. Y.  
Mr. William C. Barbour—Sayre, Pa.  
Miss Elizabeth Billings—Woodstock, Vt.  
Mrs. Elizabeth G. Britton—New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park,  
New York  
Mrs. R. H. Carter—Laconia, N. H.  
Mr. Edward B. Chamberlain—Brunswick, Me.  
Mrs. Louis N. Chapin—55 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Mr. Willard N. Clute—New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park, N. Y.  
Prof. J. Franklin Collins—468 Hope Street, Providence, R. I.  
Rev. Charles H. Demetrio—Emma, Lafayette Co., Mo.  
Prof. Alvah A. Eaton—Seabrook, N. H.  
Mr. Wallace Greenalch—Schuylerville, N. Y.  
Dr. A. J. Grout—Plymouth, N. H.  
Miss Mary E. Hart—Dept. Biology, Western College, Oxford, O.  
Mr. J. Warren Huntington—Amesbury, Mass.  
Mrs. Josephine D. Lowe—4305 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Mr. William R. Maxon—N. Y. Botanical Garden, Bronx Park, N. Y.  
Mr. Frank E. McDonald—417 California Ave., Peoria, Ill.  
Miss Nellie Mirick—38 East Walnut Street, Oneida, N. Y.  
Mrs. Adele D. Moore—170 East First Street, Corning, N. Y.  
Miss Lura L. Perrine—State Normal School, Valley City, N. D.  
Mr. C. F. Saunders—307 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Mrs. Annie Morrill Smith—78 Orange Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Mrs. Mary L. Stevens—6 Holyoke Place, Cambridge, Mass.  
Mr. W. H. Stultz—203 West Second Street, Duluth, Minn.  
Miss Esther H. Thompson—Box 407, Litchfield, Conn.  
Miss Edith A. Warner—78 Orange Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Mr. John A. Wheeler—Milford, N. H.  
Mr. Francis Windle—3 South High Street, West Chester, Pa.

Associate Members

- Miss Alice L. Crockett—Camden, Me.  
Miss Alice E. Dacy—28 Ward Street, South Boston, Mass.  
Prof. John M. Holzinger—Winona, Minn.  
Mr. Joseph Jackson—15 Woodland Street, Worcester, Mass.  
Mr. Charles D. Lippincot—Swedesboro, N. Y.

The Members were 34 in all. Associate Members were soon merged with the Active, as after the first few months all were found to be active. Of these 34, five have died: Mrs. Emilia C. Anthony, March 17, 1904; Mrs. Adele D. Moore, in 1901 or 1902; Mr. John A. Wheeler, Sept. 4, 1905; Prof. A. A. Eaton, Sept. 29, 1908, and Mrs. Mary L. Stevens, Sept. 17, 1907. Mrs. Stevens, it will be remembered, left a bequest to the Society including her fine compound microscope. Twelve have resigned or been lost track of, leaving 17 Charter Members listed on January 1st, 1916. Rev. Charles H. Demetrio and Mr. J. Warren Huntington have written cordial letters of greeting at this time.

The first ticket for election of officers was printed in the October, 1899, issue with Mrs. M. L. Stevens, Judge of Elections. Candidates for President were Miss Mary E. Hart and Dr. A. J. Grout; for Vice-Pres., J. Franklin Collins and W. R. Maxon; for Sec.-Treas., Miss Harriet L. Wheeler and Mrs. Smith. Result—the election of Messrs. Grout and Collins and Mrs. Smith.

With the January, 1900, number *THE BRYOLOGIST* began an independent existence, a fully fledged magazine, with covers and all complete, under the joint editorship of Dr. Grout and myself, with 58 members listed and a subscription list of 203 in addition; that is, 261 copies were sent out.

Just here it may be well to clear away the haze which even at this date obscures some of the facts. Strange as it may seem, it is even now too late to be quite certain as to who first thought of having a moss society. Some years ago I contemplated writing an historical sketch for *THE BRYOLOGIST*, at the time I turned it over to the Society, and in trying to put words on paper I found my own memory at fault. I consulted Dr. Grout and he gave me little satisfaction. Mrs. Britton, when asked who first thought of the idea, would neither claim it for herself, nor impute it to either Dr. Grout or Mr. Clute. It probably shares with so many other large and glorious enterprises and inventions, in being the joint product of several brains. It certainly originated within the trio just named, though I personally feel that Dr. Grout was responsible for starting *THE BRYOLOGIST*, and that Mrs. Britton stands as the God-Mother of The Sullivant Moss Chapter, and that it is a happy coincidence that she is now our honored President. To many unacquainted with the inner history of the Society it may seem late in the day to pay her this honor, but I can assure you she has always refused heretofore to act in this capacity, though often urged. She has however in an unofficial capacity always done her full share to promote the interests of the Society as well as its magazine.

As you have noted I have used so far "Chapter" more frequently than "Society." From the first I personally was not in favor of placing our organization under the wing of the Agassiz Association, as at that time the latter was only emerging from a protracted sleep. Mr. Clute's only contribution so far as I am aware was insisting on our becoming a Chapter of the Agassiz Association with which he had affiliations. It was soon found that we were tied to a moribund association, and we dropped that connection after the first year. The Chapter paid the Agassiz Association membership dues only that first year, and on January 1, 1899, the President, Mr. Harlan H. Ballard, Pittsfield, Mass., was notified

that nothing further might be expected from us, that we considered the connection at an end. No reply being received I considered my duty done. Unfortunately being entirely new to the editorial business, and not wishing to carry things with too high a hand I let the statement on the inside of the cover stand for some time after this discontinuance, and even yet a communication to the Sullivant Moss Chapter of the Agassiz Association will occasionally be received.

Volumes 1 and 2 were edited by Dr. Grout. With volume 3 (1900) I took up the work, and till volume 9, 1906, our names appear jointly associated, though with the first number of volume 3, I became also proprietor and solely responsible for the management and financing of *THE BRYOLOGIST*. It was our plan to work together, share and share alike in the good or evil fortunes of the journal. The agreement dated November 16, 1899, is "Dr. Grout and Mrs. Smith begin work together on *THE BRYOLOGIST*, share and share alike." On that date I sent Mr. Clute \$25.00 and took over his share of the interest in the magazine, crediting a like amount to Dr. Grout "For stock in trade, good-will, etc." On November 24, 1899, I paid Mr. Clute \$15.00, thereby getting all the back numbers, making my initial outlay \$40.00, and for that sum I was the proud owner of various bundles of magazines, plates, electros, etc., and I proceeded to run things as near as I could to my ideals. Of course I had to learn the business, and made many mistakes and committed many extravagances. In order to have a free hand without criticism from a financial point of view, I soon took all the responsibility and made up from year to year the deficit, amounting at last to \$2131.28, out of my own pocket, counting it my contribution to the advancement of science. You see my aim was to publish a perfect number and then give up the work, but alas this was never realized, though the later numbers were a vast improvement on the earlier.

As has been stated, the first four volumes were issued quarterly. With January, 1902, volume 5, *THE BRYOLOGIST* became a bi-monthly of 20 pages, later increased to 24. It is still a bi-monthly though one of my dreams had been to make it a monthly. Alas I was not young and strong enough to do all I would have liked doing. During 1909 I became convinced that a younger person as editor would do better work, and began to look for such a one, going to Boston where our Society held its 6th meeting in connection with the A. A. A. S. in the hope of there finding him. On returning from Cambridge on the afternoon of December 31st, I fell on the ice and broke my arm, being incapacitated for several months. During this time Miss Warner, my ever faithful co-worker, with Dr. Grout's supervision got out the two succeeding numbers.

A plan had been devised and was sent out in a circular letter dated December 9th, 1910, stating that *THE BRYOLOGIST* had grown from a four-page quarterly to a 24-page bi-monthly, and the Society from 34 to over 200 members. To the Society I proposed to give all my interest in the journal, turn over all back numbers, including the Ten-Year Index, with plates, book accounts, and so called "good-will," the journal to be published for the Society by an Editor-in-chief and a board of Associate Editors. The re-organization was completed in January, 1911, as explained by a second letter dated February 1st, and Dr. Grout was

appointed Editor-in-chief. Dr. Grout accepted this office with reluctance, and only after great pressure from friends of the enterprise had been brought to bear, as absolutely no one could be found at that time willing to undertake the work. Dr. Grout took it at great personal sacrifice to ensure its continuance, adding thereby a heavy burden to his High School duties. The Advisory Board, consisting of the officers of the Society, became responsible for the publication, and four Associate Editors were appointed representing the four groups treated of in *THE BRYOLOGIST*, namely: Acrocarpous Mosses, Prof. John M. Holzinger; Pleurocarpous Mosses, Dr. George N. Best; Hepatics, Dr. Alexander W. Evans; Lichens, Prof. Lincoln W. Riddle.

It may not be out of place at this time to emphasize what the Society has done in the way of promoting interest in the mosses, and indirectly in making possible such books as Dr. Grout's "Mosses with a Hand-lens"; a second edition "Mosses with hand-lens and Microscope, including the Hepatics"; and the third large volume "Mosses," published in 1903. Prof. Fink has repeatedly expressed to me his appreciation of the way in which his series of articles was illustrated and published, as they brought him to the notice of a wide circle of readers and created a demand for, and fostered further studies culminating in his volumes on the lichens. And we all take pride, I know, in the volume "How to Know the Mosses," recently published by Mrs. Elizabeth M. Dunham, one of our members since 1904. The series of special articles which appeared in the earlier volumes, are worthy of note, as they formed the first popular treatment of the genera, save for that pioneer series of Mrs. Britton's in *The Observer*. For many of us those articles were the foundation on which we reared our later work—they formed the bridge which connected with the Manual.

Then in field work we might fairly claim to have promoted exploration when we recall the collections of A. S. Foster in Oregon and Washington; Severin Rapp in Florida; A. L. Brinkman in British Columbia and Alberta; the late C. C. Kingman in Southern California; Miss Crockett in Maine, and others who contributed ample material for the curators to work up. We should also mention the large number of foreign correspondents, men and women of note in all countries of Europe and Australia, to whom we owe gratitude for material gifts, also for their inspiration to nobler endeavor.

It should be explained that, almost from the first, hepatics and lichens had been sent in for determination, as beginners often confused the groups when found growing together with the mosses. I began at once to form a Chapter Herbarium of mosses, and it was exhibited at the second meeting of the Sullivant Moss Chapter held June 27, 1900, in the Museum Building of the New York Botanical Garden, consisting of 153 sheets. At this time it was proposed to add hepatics and lichens, and Mr. William C. Barbour undertook the hepatics, and Mrs. Carolyn W. Harris, the lichens. The first number of her long and fine series was on "The Usneas," illustrated by a beautiful plate in January, 1901. In the next issue, April, Mr. Barbour began his series on Hepatics with a study of *Marchantia* and *Conocephalum*, and each took charge of the herbarium for their special group. Thus was started the three-fold herbarium of the Society

now reaching large proportions under Dr. Conklin and Miss Haynes for the Hepatics, and Mr. C. C. Plitt for the Lichens, and Mr. Kaiser the Mosses.

If time permitted it would be interesting to dwell on the names of those early contributors to the success of the Society and its journal. Among them stands out as lichenists, Mrs. Carolyn W. Harris, who was constant in her devotion till her death in May, 1910. Prof., now Dr. Bruce Fink was a contributor from March, 1903, closing his most valuable series on *Cladonias* in March, 1908. Mr. G. K. Merrill, Mr. R. Heber Howe, Jr., and our late Curator, Dr. H. E. Hasse, continued valued contributors. For the Hepaticae, Dr. Underwood till his death in 1907; Dr. Evans, Miss Haynes, and Miss Lorenz, all three happily still with us. For the Mosses, Dr. George N. Best, whose carefully written letters of elucidation of doubtful species were a boon to Miss Warner and me in our studies during those early years. Then Prof. Holzinger, Mr. Williams, and Mrs. Britton were ever ready to respond to all calls, either for manuscript or help in determinations.

If Mrs. Britton were not with us today I would feel more free to record the great debt which not only the Society but which I, personally, owe to her ever ready advice and helpful criticism in all times of need. If it had not been for Mrs. Britton's constant companionship and willingness to hear all my trials, and help solve the many problems as they arose, I would never have been able to do my part of the work. To her I owe my education in the study of cryptogams, and in fact all that I have accomplished in this line in the eighteen years since beginning the work in 1898.

It only remains to record the public meetings which we have held in connection with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, this being our eleventh session. I have spoken of the meeting of June 27th, 1900, as our second, though the *first*, held the year previous at Columbus, Ohio, can hardly be called a meeting of the Society in any true sense, but we were glad through Mrs. Britton, to take even a small part in the memorial meeting to William Starling Sullivant and Leo Lesquereux, held in their home city, in August, 1899. The third meeting was held in Philadelphia, in 1904; the fourth here in New York, in 1906; the fifth in Baltimore in 1908; the sixth in Boston in 1909; the seventh in Minneapolis in 1910, where Dr. Conklin did so much to make the meeting a success. The eighth meeting was in Washington, D. C., in 1911; the ninth in Brooklyn in 1913, at the Museum Building of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. The late Mr. Morris doing the honors of the Museum, and Dr. Gager taking us on a walk through the grounds of the Botanic Garden, since enriched by a unique Japanese Garden. The 10th meeting was in Philadelphia in 1914, and today we are holding the eleventh.

It will be seen from this rapid survey how close the connection has been between the Sullivant Moss Society and *THE BRYOLOGIST*. The journal starting first, and hinting in its opening paragraph as serving as a medium for communication between students interested in more definite study, the association of such students soon followed, and their history has ever been identical, each serving as an essential support for the other. I have chronicled the main events

only, prior to the closer union in 1911, giving ancient history, leaving the chapters of modern history for those who are so ably carrying on the work. May the Society and its journal live long years, doing much needed work in furthering the study of Mosses, Hepatics and Lichens.

78 ORANGE ST., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Inasmuch as copies of the following letters from Mrs. Smith to Society Members and Subscribers are now rare, it has been thought desirable to print them not only for their interest in connection with the preceding historical review but also as a matter of more general accessibility. Mrs. Smith has suggested cutting them down but we feel that they should be preserved intact.—EDITOR.

December 9th, 1910.

The Sullivant Moss Society, founded in 1898, has grown from the original 34 Charter members to over two hundred, and *THE BRYOLOGIST* from a four page quarterly to a bimonthly of 24 pages, with a world-wide circulation. Since January 1, 1900, I have been solely responsible for the running of *THE BRYOLOGIST*, both editorially and financially. Dr. Grout's name, by virtue of his starting *THE BRYOLOGIST*, which for two years, 1898 and 1899, was published as a Department of *The Fern Bulletin*, has always been associated with mine as editor but the responsibility whether for good or ill has been mine. In addition to this work I have been the Treasurer of the Sullivant Moss Society and have supervised its work, keeping two sets of books and looking after all the details of the double enterprise.

Since assuming proprietorship I have paid out to date \$2132.98 more than I have received, which I consider my contribution to the advancement of science during the past eleven years. This average amount, I am no longer able to continue. The mechanical work has also outgrown my physical strength. These two reasons combine to make a reorganization necessary at once.

The following plan is submitted: An Editor-in-chief and a board of Associate Editors to be appointed from Society members, and to become responsible, pro rata, for the financing of *THE BRYOLOGIST*. The editions must be paid for as issued, requiring the equivalent of a working capital, as receipts come in small amounts through the year. At the close of each year the small deficit (if any) to be divided among the six persons who are pledged to sustain the work for the year.

On my part I turn over to the Society all back numbers, Ten Year Index, plates and the so-called good-will of the journal, book accounts, etc. There is a steady income from the sale of back numbers; the file as it stands to date bringing in \$12.50. This includes the Ten Year Index and subscription to volume XIV, 1911, which will certainly be continued on some basis. Volume II is out of print and several numbers are becoming low; fortunately they are the earlier and smaller numbers and detract little from the usefulness of the work as a whole. Some plan may be devised to allow of their reprinting. So much for the few who have this work especially in hand.

On behalf of the Society members at large and the general subscribers, it is proposed to raise the Society dues to \$1.50, and the subscription price to \$1.25. This is expected to virtually divide the deficit among the members at large, who, heretofore, have contributed little else than dues to the work of the Society, and among the general subscribers.

If you favor the continuation of the Sullivant Moss Society, and *THE BRYOLOGIST* conducted as outlined, please write your response—whether in favor of,



or suggesting changes—to me at once, so that consensus of opinion may be determined and report made in the January number of *THE BRYOLOGIST*.

Respectfully submitted,

ANNIE MORRILL SMITH.

February 1st, 1911.

The plan of reorganization as outlined in my recent circular letter has been modified in order to embody some of the suggestions of those who kindly gave time and thought to the matter. The large number of replies was a source of surprise and gratification. The Society being now the owner of *THE BRYOLOGIST* outfit, its officers become, logically, the Advisory Board, including the curators of the Herbaria and Foreign Exchanges, eight in all. The Officers for 1911 have appointed Dr. A. J. Grout Editor-in-chief, with the office of publication at New Dorp, New York. As Associate Editors, Dr. Best, Dr. Evans, Profs. Holzinger and Riddle have consented to serve.

Some misapprehension has arisen from my too brief statement as to the deficit. The question has been asked: Why can a new and untried plan succeed financially when *you* have failed to make ends meet? The answer is this: I felt free to use my own money in ways I would not have done had I been accountable to a Society or any person or persons. Owing to ill health I was obliged to employ a high priced city printer who could and would come to me instead of my going to his office. In this way it also came about that supplies were ordered from him which possibly could have been bought cheaper elsewhere. For the same reason advertisements were obtained only as the few, by exchange for the most part, came to me. My deficit represents, therefore, a perfectly free-will gift, for which I ask neither reimbursement nor pity. The time has come, however, when the interests of the publication will be best served by a division of labor, the work having outgrown the ability of any one person to do well.

It is, therefore, quite within bounds to expect that the increase in Society dues, and in the subscription price will, with income from advertisements, and reduced general expenses enable the Society to publish a journal maintaining its previous character in all respects. It is hoped that each one interested in the continuance of the Society and its publication will bring it to the notice of any one likely to join in our work.

The subject of the offerings has been questioned by some, since printing members' names with address has opened the way to demands for collecting and forwarding of specimens especially from members in remote foreign countries. This has come to be a tax on membership, therefore, several have requested to have their names dropped from the Society, while remaining subscribers to *THE BRYOLOGIST*. This state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. Requests for specimens should be made only from those offering in the Exchange Department. It is urged that *any* member having *anything* to offer will communicate the specimens to the custodian of the group, who will send lists to the editor for use from time to time. In the near future it is expected to establish an "Exchange Bureau" on similar lines to that of our English friends, and to publish a check list on thin paper at small cost. Any suggestions will be gratefully received.

In turning over *THE BRYOLOGIST* to the Sullivant Moss Society I wish to thank all who have so ably seconded my efforts to build up a strong society of students of cryptogams with the journal as a means thereto. I feel that I have every reason to be, not only satisfied, but proud of the results of my ten year labor. I have enjoyed it all and only wish I were able to continue and to do more than in the past. I mean to do quite as much though in a less conspicuous role. As Treasurer of the Society I am on the Advisory Board, and expect to contribute all in my power to the increased usefulness of our Society and its publication.

ANNIE MORRILL SMITH.